



SPENCERPORT CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Spencerport Central School District
Related Service Providers
Occupational and Physical Therapy Department
&
Speech Language Therapy Department
Response to Intervention Tier I
Support for Targeting Skills in the Classroom

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SPENCERPORT CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Area of Concern: Poor Posture

General Information: Poor posture can be a result of core muscle weakness, hard-wired neurological patterns, fatigue, or low arousal level. Posture can impact a student's ability to successfully perform other tasks (i.e. writing, attending to instruction, interacting with peers, copying from the board, and/or cutting).

Classroom Strategies to Support Skill:

- Check desk and chair size.
- Make sure their feet are resting flat on the floor.
- Turn chair around so that the student rests their trunk (stomach/chest) on the back of the chair to work.
- Have students “freeze” and take the time to do a posture check.
- Have places in your classroom where students are encouraged to work in various positions (i.e. laying down, cozy chairs, standing at a counter/easel/desk, etc.).
- Try progressive muscle relaxation techniques before a seated task. Have students squeeze toes and then relax; flex feet then relax. Continue this pattern from toes to head to promote a “ready to learn” body.



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Area of Concern: Body Awareness - Difficulty Knowing Personal Space

General Information: Body awareness - knowing where one's body is in space and the position of our body parts. Students may be noticed sitting too far away or too close from own work space, bumping into objects and people, falling, sitting snugly against people or objects, or having difficulty using tools and manipulative.

Classroom Strategies to Support Skill:

- Use visual reminders of personal space, such as taping off an area on the table or carpet.
- Use alternative seating options, such as a chair with arms/sides, floor chair (i.e. folding stadium cushion), a beanbag chair or other cozy chair.
- Wear a weighted backpack for hallway transitions and a weighted vest/lap pad for seated work (consult with OT/PT regarding correct weight/procedures). Also try a weighted pencil or wrist/ankle weights.
- Use alternative work positions, such as lying on the floor or standing.
- Involve child in classroom jobs that provide heavy work (i.e. carrying/pushing/pulling a small load, washing tables, putting up/taking down chairs).
- Complete exercises that involve jumping/pushing (i.e. jumping jacks, wall/chair push-ups, animal imitations).
- Encourage activities such as climbing/hanging on playground and jumping games.



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Area of Concern: Bumps Into/Trips Over Obstacles or Peers

General Information: Students who have difficulty moving around the classroom may appear “clumsy” or uncoordinated. They may bump into objects/peers, trip, or fall. This poses a safety risk especially in crowded or busy environments.

Classroom Strategies to Support Skill:

- Make clear paths to areas in the classroom. Limit objects on the floor when possible.
- Check shoes for wear and size.
- When walking in the halls, give students a single object (ahead of them) to focus on.
- When walking in a line, have all students in class hold a rope or cue them to stay on a “track” line.
- To improve core stability, have students clasp hands in front of them (“hold a snowball”) or behind them (“ducktails”) when walking.
- Encourage varied gait patterns (when safe and appropriate) to help develop coordination and strength (i.e. walking backwards, crab walk, bear walk, duck walk, bunny hop, frog jump)



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Area of Concern: Difficulty Sitting Still/Fidgety

General Information: Students sometimes move to help keep themselves alert. Some students may be able to continue to learn while moving or fidgeting – check for understanding of information before you consider this a concern. Others distract themselves or others with their movement. These strategies increase body awareness and can promote a sense of focus to help the student complete a task. These students NEED to move to learn; eliminating movement only makes the problem worse. The recommendations below will help channel that movement.

Classroom Strategies to Support Skill:

- Incorporate movement breaks at natural transitions.
- Allow non-disruptive movement within the child's personal space.
- Have places in your classroom where students are encouraged to work in various positions (i.e. laying down, cozy chairs, standing at a counter/easel/desk, etc.).
- Utilize hallway “wiggle centers” for individuals who need breaks more frequently than natural transitions allow or who need more intense movement.
- Have the student run an errand or complete a classroom job. For example, bring books to a teacher, wipe down a table, etc.
- Trial a ball chair or wiggle cushion.
- Trial a stadium chair for sitting on the carpet.
- Provide an appropriate fidget tool (i.e. Koosh ball, stress ball, putty/play dough, small toy, paperclip, rubber band, eraser, wiki stick, pipe cleaner, shoelaces, and/or fasteners).
- Provide something to chew (i.e. gum, straw, Chewelry, hard candy).



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Area of Concern: The “Uncoordinated” Kid

General Information: Coordination is a combination of balance, timing, sequencing, planning, and strength. A breakdown in any one of these areas can make a student appear “uncoordinated.” These struggles may be most obvious in PE, on the playground, in the cafeteria, or in the hallway.

Classroom Strategies to Support Skill:

- Break down complex skills into smaller steps (i.e. practice hopping on one leg prior to skipping, lay jump rope on the ground and jump over prior to swinging a jump rope)
- Repeated practice for a specific movement with supervision and cues as needed (i.e. climbing up ladder on the playground)
- Regularly practice movement in the classroom: Jammin’ Minute, Brain Gym, jumping jacks
- Have students clasp hands in front of them (“hold a snowball”) or behind them (“ducktails”) when walking.
- Model the task or skill and then have the student practice immediately after.
- Set up opportunities to practice balance during the day. Use a chalk line outside or a tape line in the hallway to walk on like a tight rope. Stand on one leg (10-30 seconds) using the wall or a table for support as needed.
- Encourage additional games during recess (i.e. hopscotch; red light, green light; follow the leader; Simon says)



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Area of Concern: Struggles on the Playground

General Information: Students who struggle on the playground may avoid equipment and peer interactions or just sit off to the side. They may prefer to walk around the grass or perimeter or play in the woodchips versus engaging in meaningful play activities.

Classroom Strategies to Support Skill:

- Choose an encouraging “playground buddy” for the student. The “buddy” can then help the student explore equipment that may be unfamiliar with or that they are intimidated by. This should be closely monitored at first to ensure success for both students.
- Encourage student to pick out a new piece of equipment to try. Provide close supervision, physical assistance, or verbal cues as needed during this activity. Encourage them to become more independent with each attempt (i.e. climb a step higher, hold on a second longer on the monkey bars).
- Offer other alternatives to playground equipment (soccer balls, jump ropes, bubbles, chalk, spray bottles, hula hoop)
- Play “Follow the Leader” on the playground. Have the student take a turn being the leader.
- Encourage small group or whole class games for recess (parachute, balloon/beach ball volleyball, imaginary play).



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Area of Concern: Kicking, Catching, Throwing a Ball

General Information: Ball skills (kicking, catching, throwing, and / or striking) involve a combination of skills: hand-eye coordination, foot-eye coordination, strength, timing, bilateral coordination, and crossing midline. Student should be able to kick a rolling ball, catch a tennis ball with two hands, throw a distance of 10 feet, and dribble (with alternating hands) by age 6.

Classroom Strategies to Support Skill:

- Encourage student to consistently use their dominant hand for throwing.
- Encourage eye contact and communication (i.e. "I'm ready, say name) between partners.
- Introduce larger or lighter balls if a student struggles with catching. They are easier to catch.
- Crumple up trash and "toss" it away as a classroom clean up game.
- Incorporate catching bean bags or "hot potato" in classroom activities (i.e. math facts or sight words written on bean bags).
- Use bean bag toss as a way to call on students (i.e. toss bean bag to student, have them answer question, toss it back).
- Use a balloon to practice eye contact and tracking a moving object.



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Area of Concern: Initiating, Organizing, and Completing a Task

General Information: Task completion can be difficult for students that have trouble processing directions, following motor directions, or attention struggles. Executing functioning skills (i.e. the ability to plan out and reason through a task/skill) do not fully develop until middle school. Elementary age students need to be guided through organizational processes. Students may have difficulty carrying multiple materials, keeping a desk or locker neat, completing morning and end of day routines, and sequencing the steps of dressing.

Classroom Strategies to Support Skill:

- Use picture cues or lists to sequence task (i.e. hang dressing sequence in locker, tape morning routine to desk).
- Give one direction at a time.
- Model each step of the task. Have student practice each step immediately after you model.
- Use a timer to help with time management.
- Use mnemonics or songs to memorize steps of a task.
- Hurdle help: Cue the step to a task but don't do the actual task. Use questioning prompts: "Have you seen a problem like this before? Is there another way to solve the problem?"
- Use Trapper Keeper or "one-binder" system to keep all class folders together. At the elementary level use a drawer set next to desk or crate.
- Color-code all materials for a subject/class and schedule. For example, math colored red on student's schedule: red math folder, red sticker on math textbook, red sticker on calculator/other materials, etc.
- Consider having a second textbook set at home.



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Area of Concern: Cutting

General Information: Students should hold scissors using a dominant hand with their thumb in the smaller hole pointing up. Their non-dominant hand should be holding the paper in the thumbs up position with their elbow tucked in toward their body. Right-handed cutters should cut shapes in the counter-clockwise direction, and left-handed cutters should cut shapes in the clockwise direction. By the age of 5, students should be able to: snip, cut across paper, cut on a line, and cut simple shapes such as a circle and square. *This is the developmental progression of scissors skills.

Classroom Strategies to Support Skill:

- Provide loop scissors for students who are struggling to position scissors (see O.T. for equipment).
- Provide spring loaded or loop scissors for students who are struggling to open/close scissors (see O.T. for equipment).
- Widen the cutting line using a thick or colored marker.
- Experiment with what type of paper is easiest for student to cut (cardstock vs. regular vs. construction paper).
- Prompt student to turn paper so that they are always cutting forward (away from their body).
- Involve child in hand strengthening tasks and play (i.e. play dough, clothespin activities, rubber stamping, Legos, hole punching, stapling, watering plants with spray bottles). See Occupational Therapist for more ideas.
- Provide cutting practice worksheets at student's developmental cutting level (see General Information for progression).
- Have a scrap cutting box available filled with various types/textures of paper to give students extra practice and strengthening opportunities.



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Area of Concern: Pencil Grasp

General Information: There are a variety of functional pencil grasps including a static tripod grasp, lateral tripod grasp, and a dynamic tripod grasp which develop between the ages of 3-6 years old. An immature grasp may indicate upper body and/or hand weakness. A student may complain of fatigue or pain during or after writing tasks.

Classroom Strategies to Support Skill:

- Provide a beginner's (primary) pencil.
- Provide a pencil grip (a favorite is The Pencil Grip).
- Use short pencils (i.e. golf pencil) or break tall pencils/crayons.
- Have student hold a small object (i.e. cotton ball, small eraser) in the last 2 fingers of hand while holding a pencil/crayon.
- Involve child in classroom jobs that strengthen the upper body (i.e. carrying a small load, washing tables, putting up/taking down chairs).
- Involve child in hand strengthening tasks and play (i.e. play dough, clothespin activities, rubber stamping, Legos, hole punching, stapling, watering plants with spray bottles). See Occupational Therapist for more ideas.



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Area of Concern: Letter and Number Formation

General Information: Many students may have difficulty with letter and number formation. Some children are unable to retain how to form letters while others produce letters and numbers that may appear to have been drawn (letters and numbers look segmented as though they have been put together in pieces). Children first must learn to write letters that involve vertical and horizontal lines. After mastering straight lines, students learn letters and numbers that involve circles, followed by learning letters and numbers that incorporate diagonal lines. When teaching/enforcing letter and number formation it is necessary to encourage a top to bottom approach. Students should learn letter and number formation in the following progression: identification, tracing, imitation, copying, and independent mastery.

Classroom Strategies to Support Skill:

- Daily instructional practice, separate from other writing tasks, when the teacher can observe (guided practice).
- Multi-sensory practice incorporated into daily center work (play dough/clay, shaving cream, sand on a tray, gel inside a plastic bag, “writing” on a partner’s back with your finger, etc.)
- Teach letter formation in groups placing similarly formed letters together.
- Don’t forget to incorporate simple letter recognition activities such as “read the room,” locating specific letters on a worksheet, magnetic letter activities, etc.
- If you have access to an iPad try handwriting apps such as:
 - Touch and Write
 - Letter School
 - Wet Dry Try
- Make raised letters on index cards for finger tracing (using Elmer’s glue).



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Area of Concern: Reversals

General Information: Within the range of typical development, students may reverse some letters and numbers through first grade. They should be corrected and practiced, but it is not uncommon to see. Students who struggle with reversals may have difficulty discriminating differences in detail or recognizing positions of objects in relationship to each other, difficulty crossing the midline of their body, or mixed hand dominance.

Classroom Strategies to Support Skill:

- If the student is confused about his/her own left/right or dominant hand, use a bracelet/band, watch, stamp, or sticker to identify his/her writing hand.
- Make sure handwriting practice is multi-sensory and practiced often, especially letters of difficulty.
- Practice tracing problematic letters when they are found in everyday text (on signs or boxes, in stories, etc.)
- Keep a model of commonly reversed letters on the child's desk. Associate each letter with a picture for improved understanding of the sound-symbol relationship.
- Use different colors on the visual model to reinforce directionality. b & p are red to indicate the loop is on the right side of the line, d & q are green to indicate the loop is on the left side (coordinated with colored margins for left to right writing orientation – make a green margin on the left for GO and a red margin on the right for STOP).
- Using hands: bed-pig strategy.
- Use verbal cognitive cues such as:
 - “c comes before d” (make a c, then make the up/down line and it becomes a d)
 - “A lowercase b is like a capital B but without the top curve.”
 - The “bed” strategy – there is a Word World video clip about it.
 - “Bat before the ball; doorknob before the door.”
- Encourage activities that promote left/right and spatial awareness: tracing hands on a piece of paper and labeling right & left; playing Simon Says, doing puzzles, following a pattern or model to build or create something - use positional terms such as right/left, up/down, top/bottom, front/back, etc.



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Area of Concern: Alignment and Spacing

General Information: Students are expected to align letters and numbers according to the visual boundaries on a page, such as lines and/or graphic organizers. Handwritten material should also contain adequate spaces between letters and words. Developmentally, students should be able to align letters accurately on a single line, though usually given triple lined paper.

Classroom Strategies to Support Skill:

- Highlight the bottom half of the line and instruct students to “stay in the yellow” or whatever color is used for the lower case letters, tall letters start at the top and dive down and stop at the bottom line.
- Use raised line paper; create a raised bottom line by placing a Wiki Stick on the bottom line or a dried line of glue.
- There are a variety of lined paper styles and modifications (check the OT-PT shared drive for several styles).
- Highlight the left margin to increase the child’s awareness of where to begin and continue sentences. Highlight the right margin if the child tends to cram words at the ends of lines.
- Teach child to “finger space” using index finger and for lefties it is better to use a “spaceman” or Popsicle stick.
- Have child place a sticker or a dot with a stamp marker after each word as a spacer.
- Try graph paper having the child put a letter or number in each space and leave a space at the end of a word.
- Challenge the student to read a sentence that doesn’t contain spaces between words and then have them write the sentence correctly.



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Area of Concern: Poor Articulation / Phonology

General Information: Difficulty producing a sound or group of sounds is an articulation problem. Patterns that young children use to simplify adult speech are called phonological processes.

- Provide a good speech model.
- Reinforce placement cues for sounds in error (SLP can give you suggestions for a particular sound).
- Model correct production by emphasizing target sounds.
- Emphasize the correct sound production during reading/language arts activities.
- Use auditory discrimination skills to enhance speech sound awareness (Won/Run, are they the same? Run/Run, are they the same?)
- Model correct production of target sounds during reading.
- Model correct production of target sounds during all classroom activities.

Phonological Awareness

Weaknesses in the area of phonological awareness affect the identification of sounds (phonemes) and the association of these sounds with written words. Teachers can:

- Demonstrate the relationships of parts to whole.
- Model correct production of target sounds during all classroom activities.
- Segment short sentences into individual words
- Segment multi-syllable words into syllables.
Model and have the student manipulate sounds in words:
- Phoneme deletion (What do you get if you take the /s/out of sit?)
- Word to word match (Do big and boy begin with the same sound?)
- Blending (What word make if you blend the sounds /p/ /a/ /t/ together?)
- Phoneme segmentation, “What sounds do you hear in top?”
- Phoneme counting (How many sounds do you hear in home?)
- Rhyming (What rhymes with me?)



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Area of Concern: Poor Auditory Processing

General Information: Difficulty processing auditory information the same way others do, which leads to difficulty interpreting and recognizing sounds, especially the sounds composing speech.

- Reduce extraneous background noise: Scan the classroom for sources of background noise that could be reduced or eliminated before beginning to talk (i.e. shut off fans, close door to reduce hallway noise, close windows, etc.).
- Allow preferential seating: To maximize auditory and visual signals, the child should be seated close to the area of verbal instruction.
- Simplify verbal instructions: Limit the amount of information in each instruction. Present short, focused directions when giving assignments or summarizing information. Shorten sentences and use less complex vocabulary to describe tasks.
- Ensure the child's attention before beginning verbal instruction: Use attention getting devices, such as calling the student's name, telling everyone to listen or pay attention before pertinent information (i.e. assignments) and using a physical touch or cue word.
- Ensure the child's attention before beginning verbal instruction: Use attention getting devices, such as calling the student's name, telling everyone to listen or pay attention before pertinent information (i.e. assignments) and using a physical touch or cue word.
- Monitor use of rate, inflection, gestures: Use body language, facial expression, verbal emphasis and gestures to clarify content. Alter the inflection, pitch, speaking rate and volume of your voice to emphasize key words and emotional content.
- Use visual materials and physical demonstration: Back up auditory information in other modalities as often as possible to minimize errors in content received.
- Ask questions to check comprehension of material presented: Check for understanding using who, what, when, and where, and how facts for basic comprehension. Promote visual imaging of verbal content presented by suggesting that students draw mental pictures of what they hear.



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Area of Concern: Listening

General Information: Students with poor listening skills have difficulty attending to auditory information and need directions repeated, simplified, and checked for understanding.

Listening Tier 1 and Tier 2 Strategies for the Classroom

- SALAMI- Stop And Look At Me Immediately
- Check for understanding before allowing kids to continue with the task
- 1,2,3, eyes on me
- Review active listening steps before a listening activity (Eyes on the speaker, body still, ears on lips locked)
- Directly Teach Active Listening Steps
- Have student Make eye contact/Follow speaker – Look the speaker in the eyes. When the speaker is addressing a large group (e.g., during a lecture or presentation), eye contact will not be possible. In this case, follow the speaker's movements.
- Have Student Summarize what the speaker is saying – Summarize every few sentences by stating the main ideas. Take notes, if this is helpful.
- Have students Make connections – Link what you are hearing to what you already know.
- Have students Ask and answer questions – Check your understanding of what you're hearing by asking questions about what you are hearing. If you can answer the questions, you understand the material. If you can't answer the questions, you need to ask the speaker for help.



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Area of Concern: Grammar / Syntax

General Information: Students with poor grammar and syntax have difficulty understanding the rules for how words and their component parts combine to form both spoken and / or written sentences.

If your student has difficulty with Sentences/ Grammar:

- Model sentences and have the student imitate when he/ she wants to or needs to communicate.
- Take what the child says and expand upon it. Avoid saying, “Now you say it.”
- Find a way for the student to communicate when it seems difficult for him/ her (multiple choice options, cue cards).
- Have the student create and say 3- 5 extra sentences each day using classroom vocabulary or targeted grammatical forms. Use less challenging vocabulary if the student has difficulty creating sentences.
- Provide a question word to help a student begin formulation of a targeted question form (i.e., begin your question with ‘Who’).
- Give the student flash cards with various parts of speech and have the student practice making complete sentences.
- Subject- verb agreement:
- Make sure the student understands that sentences express thoughts about a subject and what the subject is or does.
- Make sure that the student understands the concept of plurality (e.g. have the student “point to a picture of a cat” and “point to a picture of *cats*.”
- Identify a peer who uses appropriate subject- verb agreement to act as a gentle and positive model for the student.
- Have the student verbally construct sentences with specific verb forms and subjects.
- Verb tense:
 - a. Make sure that the student understands the concept of verb tenses by demonstrating what “is happening,” what “already happened,” and what “will happen” through the use of objects, pictures, and/ or written sentences.
 - b. Determine if the student has appropriate sequencing skills. This is important before the use of verb tenses can be developed.
 - c. Use of a private signal to remind the student to use the correct verb tense (e.g. hand over shoulder for past tense, pointing forward for future tense).
 - d. During the day, write down the sentences that the student uses with incorrect verb tenses. Have the student make corrections for incorrect verb tenses and then read the corrected sentences aloud.



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Area of Concern: Answering Questions

General Information: Difficulty answering verbal or written questions. The most difficult questions include inferential questions.

If your student struggles to answer questions:

- Pause after questions and provide “wait time” for the student to process and answer the question.
- Repeat/ rephrase the question.
- Teach the student to communicate or say “I don’t know” to reduce any anxiety associated with not being able to answer a question.
- If unable to answer higher level “wh” questions (“Why do we brush our teeth?”) decrease the complexity of the question (“What do we do with a toothbrush?”) If the student is still unable to answer the question, use a cloze format (“We brush our teeth to keep them_____.”).
- Help the student by providing clues to the desired answer (“I asked a ‘who’ question, so I want the name of a person.”)
- Prepare the student ahead of time by letting him know what question you will be asking him.
- Set up a contract with the student with an expectation or goal of answering questions in class three to five times each day.
- Use a variety of ways to elicit a response, e.g., yes/ no questions, choosing an answer, short phrases, and sentence completion.
- Use frequent cueing techniques including modeling the response first, a key word, carrier phrase, first sound, etc.
- Tell the student you won’t call on him/ her until they volunteer, but that you expect at least one question response per day.



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Area of Concern: Listening Comprehension / Oral Comprehension

General Information: Listening Comprehension is more than just hearing what is said; rather, it is a child's ability to understand the meaning of the words he hears and to relate to them in some way.

If your student struggles with Listening Comprehension activities:

Following Directions

- Get the student's attention before giving directions.
- Call the student's name and establish eye contact
- Establish a verbal cue, such as "listen up" or "give me five."
- Stand or sit near the student before giving directions.
- Physical prompt (hand on arm, shoulder, etc) paired with student's name
- Check to be sure that you have the student's attention
- Keep directions short, simple, and concrete.
- State multi- step directions one direction at a time and confirm that the student is able to comply with each step before giving the next direction.
- When giving multi- step directions orally, write those directions on the board or provide a visual to consult as needed. Use a system for checking off steps as they are accomplished, such as a work system.
- Present directions at a slower rate.
- Look directly at the student when talking.
- Avoid long explanations or justifications for directions.
- Give directions in one location so child can focus on what you say.
- Rephrase directions- i.e., "Put your finger on" becomes "touch the..."
- Use visual cues (hands- on demonstrations and modeling, objects, pictures) as needed to help the child better grasp directions.
- Give oral directions prior to handing out materials OR hand out materials and then give oral directions.
- Chunk directions- give related directions together (e.g., "Get your book, open to page 53).
- Prompt and guide the child through the performance- sequence.
- Have the student repeat directions back to you to check comprehension.
- Have the student say the instructions in his/ her own words.
- Repeat instructions.
- Teach students to wait until all directions are given before beginning.



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Response to Intervention Tier I Support for Targeting Skills

Continued

Area of Concern: Listening Comprehension / Oral Comprehension

- Check with students often to monitor completion of directions.
- Provide the student with practice following directions on nonacademic tasks (i.e., games, recipes).
- Review daily routines often and make the implicit...explicit.
- Minimize visual and auditory distractions when giving directions.
- Provide visual supports.
- Provide a quiet place in the classroom to go to when child needs to complete a task.
- When participating in group activities, clearly explain the expectations of the group and the student's job within the group. Provide visuals as needed.
- Give positive directions to allow for incomplete language processing. For example, say, "Please stay on the sidewalk" rather than "Don't walk on the grass."
- State directions, expectations, and rules using specific "language" terms, avoiding such terms as "appropriately," "listening," "carefully," etc.
- Use pictures to show expected behaviors in transitions.
- Some students have problems copying off the board, because this requires translating to the paper, which is mediated by language. Consider changing student's seating, or have information on paper rather than on the board.
- Decide on a way that the student can signal that they require teacher help. Select a 'secret' signal for the student to use that is clearly observable to the teacher but is unlikely to draw the attention of other children. You might, for instance, pick a red folder to hold the student's alternative work and tell the student simply to pull out that folder and begin working from it whenever he or she needs instructor help.
- Reward student for following the help- signal routine.
- Create an alternative work folder and fill it with alternate assignments or worksheets that the student can work on independently while waiting for you to respond to the established 'help' signal.
- Include essential information in your directions that will answer these four questions for the student:
 - (1) How much work is there to do in this task?
 - (2) What exactly am I supposed to do?
 - (3) When do I do the work?
 - (4) What is my payoff for doing the work?



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Response to Intervention Tier I Support for Targeting Skills

Continued

Area of Concern: Listening Comprehension / Oral Comprehension

If your student struggles with Oral Comprehension:

- Tell the student a specific question to be prepared to answer following oral reading.
- State when the topic is changing.
- Use explicit transition comments when discussing multiple ideas.
- Stand or sit near the student before engaging in a discussion.
- Preview the topic of discussion or reading with focal questions that will be discussed later.
- When giving lengthy information, provide outlines or notes for the student.
- Avoid figurative language or be careful to explain what you mean.
- Limit the number of ideas in a sentence.
- Tell students, the what and why of assignments in advance.
- Keep information relevant, meaningful, contextual, purposeful, NOT broken into “meaningless” parts- be deliberate in helping the student see the “whole.”
- Pair verbal information with pictures, visual schedules, gestures, visual examples, and written directions.
- Preferential seating
 - Close to the teacher
 - Away from disruptive classmates
 - Away from visual and auditory distractions.
- Exaggerate important words that you want the child to know (e.g. highlight, underline, repeat, etc.).
- Make sure the student is paying attention (eyes on speaker, reduced distractions).
- Define expected and unexpected behaviors for different situations.
- Check often for understanding.
- Teach the student how to ask for additional information (Who? What? Where? When? Why?).
- Modify tests, such as reading the test to the student or providing short- answer or multiple-choice responses.
- Overlap information in as many ways as possible, using as many modalities and as many angles/ approaches as possible to increase redundancy and help students make the associations needed to learn.
- As you speak to your students, try to work in “connecting” words such as *so, because, then, but, when, instead, while*, etc. This gives the student more information. Our students need us to tell them *what* we are doing, *why* we are doing it, and *who* we are doing it with.
- If the student’s attention wanders, stop talking and call attention back to you.
- Use pauses in speech to highlight important points.



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Response to Intervention Tier I Support for Targeting Skills

Area of Concern: Vocabulary

General Information: Vocabulary refers to the words we must understand to communicate and learn effectively. There are four types: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Vocabulary Tier 1 and Tier 2 for the Classroom

- Less is more ---depth is more: Teach fewer curriculum vocabulary terms, but teach them in a manner that results in deep understanding of each term
- Teach terms that address key concepts or ideas: While a text chapter may contain 15-20 vocabulary terms, there may be only 4 or 5 that address critical concepts in the chapter --- sometimes only 1 or 2!
- Teach terms that will be used repeatedly throughout the semester: These are foundational concepts upon which a great deal of information will be built on over a long-term basis.
- Explain idioms. They convey meaning not indicated by their wording.
- When using words with multiple meanings, make sure the student knows which one he is to focus on.
- When reviewing written drafts of essays/reports, underline 'overused words' and have the student use a thesaurus to find a more appropriate term.
- Provide extra classroom focus using vocabulary activities like word wall, word of the day, naming items into categories, etc.
- Pre- teach vocabulary required for lessons.
- Use word webs, story organizers, and vocabulary classification to build word knowledge.
- Have the student highlight difficult words and ask for clarification.
- Present new vocabulary words with definition that is understandable to the student (student- friendly).
- Give examples when possible.
- Have students give examples of terms.
- Provide pictures, objects, and the new word simultaneously.
- Sort new vocabulary by feature, category, function, comparison, and association.
- Break down root word and prefixes and suffixes.
- Provide synonyms and antonyms for new words.
- Help develop memory strategies for students to remember words.
- Select a limited number of vocabulary words.
- Maintain a vocabulary book with definitions of new words that the student comes across in reading materials.
- Have the student develop a vocabulary log that contains:
 - Word
 - Student friendly explanation
 - A sentence to illustrate the word's meaning
 - An illustration
 - Part of speech
 - Provide different types of cues to help the student's recall:



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Response to Intervention Tier I Support for Targeting Skills

Area of Concern: Stuttering (Fluency)

General Information: Stuttering is characterized by disruptions in the production of speech sounds.

- Talk slowly to the student in order to reinforce easy, relaxed speech.
- Do not call too much attention to the stuttering.
- Do not tell student to slow down or relax.
- Reinforce the student's fluent speech.
- Encourage conversation during periods of smooth talking.
- Respond to what the student says, not how he/she says it.



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Response to Intervention Tier I Support for Targeting Skills

Area of Concern: Social Language (Pragmatics)

General Information: Social language involves three major communication skills.

1. Using language to greet, inform, demand, promise, or request.
2. Changing language according to the needs of the listener or situation.
3. Following rules for conversation and storytelling.

Social Language Classroom Tier 1 and Tier 2 Strategies for the Classroom

- Point out social rules of conversation such as eye contact, listening, turn-taking and topic maintenance.
- Provide explicit verbal feedback when the child breaks a conversational rule
- Model an appropriate response when the child breaks a conversational rule
- Make nonverbal cues of peers obvious: i.e. “When Johnny looks away while you are talking, “what does that mean?”; “How do you know when someone else wants a turn to talk?”
- Model short, straight forward communication interactions.



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Response to Intervention Tier I Support for Targeting Skills

Area of Concern: Poor Vocal Quality

General Information: Voice disorders are characterized by hoarse or breathing quality, and nasal quality, high or low pitch which is unusual for age and gender, or talking too loudly or softly. You may also lose your voice when speaking.

- Provide a good vocal model.
- Use discrimination activities to illustrate indoor versus outdoor voice production.
- Praise the student for the appropriate use of his/her voice.
- Respond to what the student says, not how he/she say it.
- Minimize prolonged verbalizations.
- Establish a cuing system with student to assist with monitoring vocal production within the classroom.
- Encourage the student to relax while speaking.
- Reduce talking time when student's vocal quality is noticeably impaired



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Response to Intervention Tier I Support for Targeting Skills

Area of Concern: Memory

General Information: Difficulty retaining short or long term information in memory.

- Present material in a multi-sensory manner.
- Speak slowly and clearly: This allows the student with poor short term memory more time to attach meaning to the message.
- Bring student onto task before new material is presented: This ensures that the student is focused and ready to receive new information
- Provide a visual back-up for the auditory stimulus which dissipates so rapidly (i.e. prepared notes, outline on board)
- Require student to review frequently to foster consolidation in memory.
- Provide student with strategies to organize new information: i.e. chunking of information, related information, labeling categories, mnemonics
- Assign a peer note taker: A student with weak short term auditory memory will find it difficult to listen, remember, understand and take notes at the same time. Relieving the student of the task of note taking leaves him free to focus more clearly on the material being presented orally.
- Encourage the student to participate in class discussions: This will provide feedback to the teacher as to where breakdowns in understanding have occurred.